

Message Text

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PAGE 01 ROME 12343 051455Z
ACTION EUR-12

INFO OCT-01 ISO-00 CIAE-00 DODE-00 INR-10 NSAE-00
PA-01 ICA-11 SP-02 /037 W
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FM AMEMBASSY ROME
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4005
AMEMBASSY PRAGUE
INFO AMEMBASSY MOSCOW

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E.O. 11652: NA
TAGS: PINT, IT, CZ
SUBJECT: COMMUNISTS TO DISCUSS EXPERIENCE OF PRAGUE SPRING

1. THE ITALIAN COMMUNIST PARTY'S (PCI) GRAMSCI INSTITUTE IS SPONSORING DURING THE PERIOD JULY 7-9 A SEMINAR ON THE EXPERIENCE OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK SPRING OF 1968. ALTHOUGH NOT BEING ADVERTISED AS SUCH, THE SEMINAR IS BEING HELD IN CONJUNCTION WITH THE TENTH ANNIVERSARY OF THE SO-CALLED PRAGUE SPRING.
2. INDICATIONS ARE THAT THERE WAS CONSIDERABLE DEBATE WITHIN THE PCI REGARDING THE ORGANIZATION OF THE SEMINAR. IN AN ATTEMPT TO MINIMIZE THE FALL-OUT IN TERMS OF PCI RELATIONS WITH THE COMMUNIST PARTIES OF EASTERN EUROPE, A DECISION WAS APPARENTLY MADE TO LIMIT PARTICIPATION IN THE SEMINAR TO ITALIANS, BOTH COMMUNIST AND NON-COMMUNIST. ACCORDINGLY, CZECHOSLOVAK EXILES CURRENTLY LIVING IN ITALY WHO WERE PART OF THE PRAGUE SPRING EXPERIENCE WILL NOT PARTICIPATE NOR WILL REPRESENTATIVES OF THE CZECHOSLOVAK GOVERNMENT OR THE CZECHOSLOVAK COMMUNIST PARTY. (WE UNDERSTAND THAT RUDE PRAVO HAS INDICATED THAT THE CZECHS THROUGH THEIR EMBASSY IN

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ROME SOUGHT TO RECEIVE AN OFFICIAL INVITATION TO PARTICIPATE, A MOVE WHICH THE PCI REJECTED.)

3. ACCORDING TO A PRESS SOURCE WHO HAS BEEN INVITED TO OBSERVE THE SEMINAR, THERE WILL BE THREE PRINCIPAL DISCUSSION PAPERS DEALING WITH THE POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL SIGNIFICANCE OF THE PRAGUE SPRING. CENTRAL

COMMITTEE MEMBER (AND A SENIOR PCI THEORETICIAN),
LUCIANO GRUPPI, WILL DELIVER THE PAPER ON THE POLITICAL
THEME; WHILE OTHER SENIOR PARTY OFFICIALS MIGHT ATTEND
PARTS OF THE SEMINAR, NONE ARE SCHEDULED TO DELIVER
FORMAL REMARKS.

4. FOCUSING ATTENTION ON THE EXPERIENCE OF THE PRAGUE
SPRING IN TERMS OF ITS POLITICAL, ECONOMIC AND CULTURAL
EVOLUTION, THE PCI, ACCORDING TO LOCAL SOURCES, HOPES
TO LIMIT ATTENTION TO THE SOVIET-LED INVASION WHICH
EFFECTIVELY BROUGHT TO AN END THE DUBCEK ERA. HOWEVER,
THE PRESENCE OF NON-COMMUNIST PARTICIPANTS AT THE
SEMINAR SUGGESTS THAT THE PCI WILL FIND IT HARD TO
ACHIEVE THIS GOAL. IN ANY EVENT, THE PCI'S HANDLING OF
THE SEMINAR SUGGESTS ONCE AGAIN THE DILEMMA THE PARTY
FACES WHEN IT SEEKS TO ANALYZE DEVELOPMENTS IN THE
EASTERN EUROPEAN SOCIETIES. GARDNER

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